



moving in **bold** directions

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The mission of the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) is to continually enhance the professionalism of California law enforcement. To accomplish this important responsibility, this strategic plan aligns POST's activities and priorities with the needs and expectations of POST's clients and partners. It provides direction for POST to achieve its mission, to develop future budget requests, and to set priorities. The plan provides guidance not only for "what" POST does, but also for "how" POST will accomplish its goals and objectives. POST's Vision, Mission, and Values also provide the context for POST as an organization and this Strategic Plan.

This plan, initially approved in 1997, is annually updated after extensive internal and external assessments. The plan contains three strategic goals and 48 objectives (of which 31 are new and 17 are returning from the previous plan) which are continuously reported upon as to implementation activities.

POST wishes to thank all those law enforcement and training professionals who dedicated their time and talents in providing input into the revisions included in this strategic plan.

Questions concerning this plan should be directed to Assistant Executive Director Hal Snow at (916) 227-2807.

KENNETH J. O'BRIEN  
Executive Director



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## POST'S VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

**Vision** To be the leading organization in establishing professional standards, assuring top-quality training, and providing effective services to develop and support the world's finest peace officers and law enforcement organizations.

**Mission** The mission of the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) is to continually enhance the professionalism of California law enforcement in serving its communities.

POST fulfills its mission through. . .  
*cooperation, advocacy, advancing professionalism, exchanging information, and resource stewardship.*

**Values** Central to our mission are the values that guide our work and decisions, and help us contribute to the quality of programs and services we provide.

We value. . .  
*service and respect, cooperation and teamwork, pride and contribution, learning and accountability, innovation and diversity, communication and decision making*



goals **and** objectives

**GOALS AND OBJECTIVES** (Updated July 2006)

**Goal A Raise the Bar on Selection and Training Standards**

1. Establish personality assessment for entry-level selection.
2. Review POST's Continuing Professional Training (CPT) requirement, including hours, frequency, and recognition programs for law enforcement agencies which exceed POST's minimums.
3. Research and develop physical abilities assessment for entrants into basic academies.
4. Standardize skill testing for basic course.
5. Develop a guideline manual describing the process for law enforcement to integrate POST's selection guidelines and standards.
6. Study the feasibility of raising the entry-level education requirement above high school or GED (taking into consideration law enforcement recruitment issues).
7. Study the feasibility of raising the entry-level reading and writing requirement (taking into consideration law enforcement recruitment issues).
8. Study the feasibility of requiring reading and writing testing for entry into the basic academy (taking into consideration law enforcement recruitment issues).
9. Develop a guideline manual describing the process for law enforcement to integrate POST's selection guidelines and standards.
10. Study the need and feasibility for modifying the current probationary period for peace officers, including the possible redefinition of when the probationary period begins.
11. Compare POST's selection and training standards to those in other states as articulated in the IADLEST Sourcebook for the purpose of identifying potential improvements.
12. Develop a "candidate pre-assessment package" (information and assessment) for prospective peace officer candidates.
13. Review the training standards and current employment levels for reserve peace officers in view of recruitment difficulties

**Goal B    Improve the Quality and Impact of Training**

1. Simplify and expedite the course certification process.
2. Establish instructor training and certification requirements.
3. Establish a “lessons learned from training” database in order to capture past experience in training development.
4. Provide to POST’s Regional Skills Training Centers updated driver training and force options simulators and program software.
5. Study the feasibility of developing technology-based training tools that provide just-in-time information (i.e., tutorials, checklists, etc.) for use on patrol car computers and Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs).
6. Develop adequate training opportunities to allow all instructors who teach in POST-certified training courses to stay current and refreshed.
7. Develop a POST Distance Learning Plan for the delivery of Web-based training.
8. Develop a Web-based training tool that would help train investigators to efficiently develop search warrants for a variety of crimes.
9. Study the feasibility of upgrading the present POST Basic Course Certification Review process to an accreditation program.
10. Study the feasibility of allowing non-sworn managers of equivalent sworn ranks to attend the Sherman Block Supervisory Leadership Institute (SBSLI), Command College, etc.
11. Study the feasibility of increasing flexibility in certifying training that satisfies the POST Perishable Skills training requirement (i.e., accumulation of two-hour courses).
12. Develop “update training” for background investigators based upon changes to the POST Background Investigation Manual.
13. Develop a major-case management training course for managers/executives.



**Goal C Enhance POST's Services**

1. Study the feasibility of providing intermediate and advanced professional certificates for dispatchers.
2. Study the feasibility of establishing a mentoring program for POST employees.
3. Study the feasibility and need for establishing a "volunteer training evaluator program" to supplement POST's efforts to maintain course quality.
4. Revise the POST Administrative Manual to make it more user-friendly and formatted for on-line availability.
5. Study the feasibility of removing barriers to POST employment by CalPERS retirees from law enforcement and other public agencies.
6. Develop a comprehensive plan for POST's role in addressing law enforcement recruitment issues.
7. Study the feasibility of awarding college credit for POST's premier training courses (i.e., MIDP, SBSLI, etc).
8. Study the feasibility of establishing a Basic Course Waiver process for public safety dispatchers.
9. Develop an automated scoring process for scenario-based testing in the Basic Course using the TMAS system.
10. Review the composition of the POST Advisory Committee to reflect POST's current clients and partners.
11. Develop means to heighten public awareness about successes in professionalizing California law enforcement.
12. Study the feasibility of POST developing an Internet database for non-sponsored academy graduates seeking employment in law enforcement.
13. Develop means of expediting the issuance of POST certificates.



appendices **A–B**

## **A P P E N D I X   A**

### **AGENCY DESCRIPTION**

#### **Introduction**

One of law enforcement's primary functions is to protect people and property. California's law enforcement officers are charged with carrying out this fundamental task. Members of law enforcement represent a tangible line between civilization and chaos. Officers are expected to confront violence, crime, and tragedy, with skill and courage, often in the face of great personal danger. Their skill, sensitivity, and ethics depend in large part on how carefully they are selected, the quality of their training, and the depth of their leadership skills. Today, California, with its diverse culture, requires peace officers with the highest qualifications.

The Commission's goal is to concentrate its services on the three ingredients believed to be most critical to effective law enforcement:

- I. Meeting the statewide need for consistent peace officer selection standards by developing and updating job-related selection standards.
- II. Assuring that California peace officers have access to appropriate training to acquire the skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviors which are consistent with the requirements and expectations of professional competence associated with the job at each career and experience stage.
- III. Fostering and facilitating healthy and productive organizational environments in which officers work by providing a system of leadership development programs and offering management counseling services.

#### **Commission**

The Commission on POST is a state agency which was formally established in 1959. It consists of 15 members, 14 of whom are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate, for three-year, overlapping terms. Commissioners are selected to provide a balanced group of city and county administrators, law enforcement professionals, educators, and public members. The State Attorney General is a Commissioner by law.

The POST Advisory Committee is the Commission's "sounding board" and provides input on many of the Commission's complex issues. The Advisory Committee represents the major associations and organizations within California's law enforcement and training communities. Educators and public members also serve on the Committee.

The POST Commission establishes minimum selection and training standards, provides counseling on improving management practices, and provides financial assistance to agencies to support the training of their peace officers, dispatchers, and paraprofessional employees. Other major responsibilities include:

- Administering a professional certificate program for peace officers, reserves, dispatchers, and records supervisors;
- Incorporating instructional technology in training;
- Conducting feasibility studies regarding peace officer status;
- Developing training requirements for POST and statutory mandates;
- Providing testing services for certain training mandates, selection requirements, basic course equivalency requests, and requalifications;
- Making available relevant and high quality training;
- Ensuring adherence to POST's selection and training requirements.

### **Agency Participation**

As provided for in Penal Code Section 13510, public entities employing enumerated peace officers and public safety dispatchers may participate in the POST program. Participation amounts to a form of contract. Participating agencies agree to abide by standards established by POST and, in turn, are eligible for financial assistance in training their personnel. Agencies and peace officer employees also become eligible to participate in the Commission's services and programs.

Eligible peace officers include city police officers, sheriffs and deputy sheriffs, reserve peace officers, marshals and deputy marshals, district attorney investigators, coroners and deputy coroners, police officers employed by a range of districts, and campus police officers of the University of California, California State University and Colleges, community colleges, and local school districts.

Agency participation includes:

- All 58 county sheriffs' departments;
- All 343 cities which maintain police departments;
- All UC and CSU system campuses;
- District attorneys' offices; and
- Other departments employing officers in a variety of categories.

By Commission regulation, state agencies, and certain local departments employing peace officers not covered within the statutory scope of the POST program, may participate without eligibility for funding. On this basis, all state agencies, and a variety of local departments employing peace officers, participate. They voluntarily subscribe to POST's minimum personnel selection and training standards. Officers employed by these agencies are eligible to participate in the Commission's professional certificate program. In all, over 627 agencies participate in the POST Program. These participating agencies employ over 75,000 full-time peace officers, 8,000 reserves, and 6,000 public safety dispatchers. A history of law enforcement employment, POST certificates, and POST training are maintained on most of these individuals.

**Funding**

The POST program is funded by the Peace Officer Training Fund (POTF), which receives monies from the State Penalty Assessment Fund. The fund receives monies from penalty assessments on criminal and traffic fines. Therefore, the POST program is financed primarily by persons who violate the laws that peace officers are trained to enforce.

**A P P E N D I X   B****INTERNAL/EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT SUMMARY**

POST operates in a unique environment and with long-standing assumptions and key factors that have been carefully considered in the preparation of this plan. Some of these environmental conditions and basic assumptions include the following:

- The POST Program was established and continues to operate on the premise that professional law enforcement is a shared state and local responsibility. The state has an interest because peace officers derive their powers, standards, and the laws they enforce from the state. The state desires some measure of uniformity in enforcement.
- The POST Program is voluntary and an incentive-based program in that the law enforcement agencies that continuously meet its training and selection standards are entitled to benefits such as job-related assessment tools for use in selecting employees, professional certificates, management counseling services, relevant training, and training reimbursement.
- While POST was initially established for local law enforcement, it has been expanded to include state law enforcement agencies, school districts, and other special districts.
- The number of clients participating in the POST Program has grown rapidly in the last ten years and is expected to continue. More than 75,000 peace officers participate in the reimbursement program. More than 18,000 peace officers, primarily from State agencies, participate in the non-reimbursement specialized program. POST also sets standards for more than 8,000 reserve officers and 6,000 public safety dispatchers.
- In addition to implementing POST's training mandates, the Commission has responsibility for setting standards for over 30 legislative training mandates that must be continuously reviewed and updated.
- Because POST is recognized as an authority on peace officers and law enforcement, POST is statutorily required to provide management counseling services, to conduct peace officer feasibility studies, and to inspect for standards compliance.
- The rapidity of change impacts the retraining of officers at all levels, requiring constant review and quick updating of training content and standards.
- POST, in developing and delivering training to law enforcement, is in partnership with agencies, community colleges, universities, and other training presenters. Each group plays a critical role in maintaining POST's training delivery system.

- Because leadership is one of the cornerstones of effective and professional law enforcement, POST has assumed responsibility for developing and making available the finest leadership development programs for all levels of law enforcement.
- Law enforcement is growing increasingly complex and, correspondingly, the demands upon officers are ever increasing. As a result, employers are required to recruit and select candidates who possess the necessary aptitudes and qualities to learn and to perform the job successfully. The costs associated with sub-par employee productivity, turnover, and counter-productive behavior are substantial, both from a monetary and a public safety standpoint.
- POST operates in an environment of increasing demands and decreasing (or at best stabilized) resources that call for continual prioritization of resources and programs. The primary financial responsibility for training peace officers has been and continues to be local government.
- Use of modern instructional technology (distance learning, driver training simulators, and distant training) to deliver training is a POST priority because of its capability to improve learning and training access.
- POST's human resources have significantly contributed to its success. This resource must continue to be developed in order to address the changes brought about by this plan and the rapidly changing expectations of law enforcement.
- POST coordinates a large comprehensive training program with over 4,322 certified courses and over 786 course presenters. Conducting training needs assessments, certifying courses, ensuring quality, and maintaining the system are necessary responsibilities.
- POST's clients and partners have a need and desire for "raising the bar" as it relates to peace officer selection and training standards.